

HOUSE COMMUNICATIONS

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TOMORROW'S FORECAST

- * The House will reconvene for its 8th Legislative Day on Wednesday, January 25, at 10:00 am.
- * 1 bill is expected to be debated on the floor.

GEORGIA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**DAILY REPORT****TUESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2006****LEGISLATIVE DAY# 7****TODAY ON THE FLOOR**

Speaker of the House, Glenn Richardson, gavelled the House into session today, at 10:00 am, for the 7th legislative day of the 2nd Session of the 148th General Assembly.

DEBATE CALENDAR**HB 804 - Barratry; Code section; repeal**

- Repeals the Barratry Code. Committee substitute adds language in reference to definitions in the RICO Act.
- Authored by: Rep. David Ralston
- Rules Committee: Open Rule
- House Committee: Judiciary - Civil
- Amendment(s): None
- Y: 161 N: 0

HB 973 - Speed detection device; law enforcement officers; change provisions

- Speed detection devices may be used in properly marked school zones one hour before, during and one hour after the normal hours of school operation.
- Authored by: Rep. Wendell Willard
- Rules Committee: Open Rule
- House Committee: Public Safety
- Amendment(s): None
- Y: 160 N: 1

BILLS CARRIED OVER FROM PREVIOUS LEGISLATIVE DAY**HB 344 - Firefighters' Pension Fund; return to service after retirement; benefit**

- Bill allows retired firefighters to return to service after retirement. Upon reemployment, the retirement benefit will be terminated; but, the member is eligible to begin drawing retirement benefit again after reemployment ceases and the member has added at least one year of creditable service. The retirement benefit will be recalculated to include the added creditable service. (Currently, the retirement benefit is not recalculated unless the member was reemployed for seven or more years.)
- Authored by: Rep. Bill Cummings
- House Committee: Retirement
- Rules Committee: Open Rule
- Amendment(s): None
- Y: 165 N: 0

HB 357 - Class Nine Fire Department Pension Fund; increase maximum monthly retirement benefit

- Bill would increase the maximum monthly retirement benefit to \$500 (currently \$165).
- Authored by: Rep. Bill Cummings
- House Committee: Retirement
- Rules Committee: Open Rule
- Amendment(s): None
- Y: 155 N: 0

HB 660 - Firefighters' and Class Nine Pension Funds; certain active military duty; creditable service

- Bill provides creditable service to any member of the fund who left active employment as a result of being called to active duty as a member of the Armed Services and who returned to employment as a firefighter upon being released. Within one year of returning to service, the member must make application to the board and pay the normal monthly dues for each month of the break in service. The board is authorized to calculate creditable service on a monthly basis.
- Authored by: Rep. Bill Cummings
- House Committee: Retirement
- Rules Committee: Open Rule
- Amendment(s): None
- Y: 162 N: 0

HB 749 - Firefighters' Pension; certain active military duty; creditable service

- Bill provides for the merger of the Georgia Firefighters' Pension Fund and the Georgia Class Nine Fire Department Pension Fund and provides for a transfer of membership and assets. Bill redefines firefighter to include volunteers with a class nine fire department and meet standards specified solely by the Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council.
- Authored by: Rep. Bill Cummings
- House Committee: Retirement
- Rules Committee: Open Rule
- Amendment(s): None
- Y: 160 N: 0

* The House will reconvene Wednesday, January 25 at 10:00 am for its 8th Legislative Day of the 2nd Regular Session of the 148th General Assembly.

RULES COMMITTEE

The Committee on Rules today has fixed the calendar for the 8th Legislative Day, Wednesday, January 25, as enumerated below, and can be called at the pleasure of the Speaker of the House.

DEBATE CALENDAR

HB 713 - Ronald Reagan Day in Georgia; designate February 6 annually

- This bill would designate February 6 of each year as 'Ronald Reagan Day' in Georgia.
- Authored by: Rep. Bobby Franklin
- House Committee: Rules
- Rules Committee: Structured

** The Rules Committee will next meet on Wednesday, January 25 at 9:00 am to set the Debate Calendar for the 9th Legislative Day.*

COMMITTEE ACTION REPORT

Appropriations - Economic Development

2006 Supplemental Budget Hearings

- PSC
- Soil & Water

Appropriations - Higher Education

2006 Supplemental Budget Hearings

Appropriations - General Subcommittee

2006 Supplemental Budget Hearings

- ERS
- Revenue
- Audits
- Banking

Agriculture

HB 999 - Veterinarians and veterinary technicians; certain requirements; change provisions

- This bill defines the professions of Veterinary Technologist and Veterinary Assistant. 'Veterinary technology' means the science and art of providing certain aspects of professional medical care and treatment for animals and the practice of veterinary medicine as may be delegated and supervised by a licensed veterinarian and performed by a person who is not a licensed veterinarian. Veterinary assistant means a person who engages in certain aspects of the practice of veterinary technology but is not registered by the board for such purpose. The bill also removes homeopathic and botanical medicine from the definition of what constitutes the practice of veterinary medicine. The last section provides for certain veterinary assistants to be grandfathered for a certain time period to allow for them to take the registration exam if they have been practicing veterinary technology under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian for five years prior to the enactment of this bill, and give them three years within which to take and pass their veterinary technology registration exam.
- Authored by: Rep. Gene Maddox
- Committee Action: Do Pass

Banks & Banking

HB 864 - Pawn transactions; motor vehicle sales surplus; provisions

- 1) Any profits obtained by the pawnbroker upon the sale of the pledgor's repossessed motor vehicle are returned to the pledgor. The pledgor must pay all principal, interest, and charges through the date of repossession to receive the sales surplus. Reasonable attorney's fees and legal expenses are calculated into the cost of the repossession. 2) The seller of a title pawn transaction must make a payment of at least 5 percent of the original principal amount of the title pawn transaction. This 5 percent of the principal is in addition to interest and charges earned. The principal reduction applies when a pledgor extends or continues his/her title pawn transaction for the fourth time, and each following extension thereafter.
- Authored by: Rep. James Mills
- Committee Action: Do Pass

Game, Fish & Parks

No legislative action was taken.

- The committee heard a presentation by Spud Woodward, Assistant Division Director, Coastal Resources Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GaDNR) on the topic of Shrimp Fishery Regulatory Reform. Mr. Woodward described the challenges faced by those who participate in Georgia's shrimp fishery, both trawlers and cast netters, recreational and commercial. Mr. Woodward described the need for regulatory reform as originating with conflicts between user groups, between user groups and regulatory agencies, and between user groups, the public and conservation groups. As he put it, "It is imperative that GaDNR lead the process to resolve present conflicts, prevent future conflicts, and to advance shrimp fishery management."

Higher Education

No legislative action was taken.

- A hearing was held on transferring credits and Honors/AP course credit weights. Those addressing the committee included Dr. Dan Papp with the University System, Dr. Freida Hill with the Department of Technical and Adult Education, Mary Alexander with the Georgia Student Finance Commission and Dr. Henry Hector with the Independent College Foundation.

Judiciary - Civil

Agenda: HB 494, HB 705, HB 716, HB 989, SB 253

No update provided

Motor Vehicles

HB 18 - Seat belts; passenger vehicles; eliminate certain exceptions

- This bill requires the use of seatbelts in pick-up trucks. There is an exception when vehicle is used for agricultural purpose.
- Authored by: Rep. Calvin Hill
- Committee Action: Do Pass by Committee Substitute

HB 161 - Drivers' licenses; social security number; prohibit use

- This bill would prohibit the use of social security numbers on driver's licenses unless the licensee specifically requests it be used.
- Authored by: Rep. Burke Day
- Committee Action: Do Pass by Committee Substitute

HB 1052 - Motor vehicles; distinguishable transporter license plate; provisions

- This bill provides that a person engaged in the business of the limited operation of a motor vehicle for any of the following purposes may obtain a distinguishable transporter license plate authorizing the movement of the vehicle for the specific purpose: (1) To facilitate the delivery of new or used motor vehicles, trucks, or buses between manufacturers, distributors, dealers, sellers, or purchasers; (2) To move a mobile office, a mobile classroom, a mobile or manufactured home, or a house trailer; (3) To drive a motor vehicle that is part of the inventory of a dealer to and from a motor vehicle trade show or exhibition or to, during, and from a parade in which the motor vehicle is used.
- Authored by: Rep. Jack Murphy
- Committee Action: Do Pass by Committee Substitute

Special Rules

HB 950 - Public employees and students; celebration of holidays; prohibit restrictions

- Prohibits governmental entities in this state from restricting or prohibiting a public employee or public school student from verbal expressions relating to the celebrations or observance of any public or legal holiday.
- Authored by: Rep. Clay Cox

- Committee Action: Do Pass by Substitute

HB 941 - Archives and History, Division of; documents; religious heritage; recognize

- This legislation amends Code Section 44-12-300 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to state recognition of American Indian tribes, so as to officially recognize the Southeastern Cherokee Council, Inc.
- Authored by: Rep. Tommy Benton
- Committee Action: Do Pass

Special Committee on Civil Justice Reform

HB 912 - Civil practice; production of documents; amend provisions

- Reinstates a procedure in place regarding the release of medical records. In cases where a party's medical condition is at issue, and medical records are requested from a hospital or health care facility, the hospital may release the records, immune from civil or criminal liability, so long as the patient was given 20 days notice and does not object to the release of the records. This shifts the burden to object to the release of privileged information within medical records from the hospitals to the patient.
- Authored by: Rep. Barry Fleming
- Committee Action: Do Pass by Committee Substitute

SB 238 - Torts; immunity from civil liability for non-profit organizations

- Provides for immunity from civil liability for organizations which provide financial support to charitable events. If an organization is only a financial sponsor of an event, and is not involved in the management, organization, or planning of the event, that organization cannot be held civilly liable for any personal injury or property damage arising from the event. SB 238 was passed out of the Special Committee by substitute last session, but was recommitted due to adjournment.
- Authored by: Rep. Judson Hill
- Committee Action: Do Pass by Committee Substitute

Ways & Means

The Ways and Means Committee met at 3:30 in Room 133 of the Capitol. The Chairman assigned bills and resolutions to the appropriate subcommittees. No action was taken on any bills.

** Committee action reports are edited for this report. For full content, please contact the House Committee Services Office at 404-656-3206. Bills passing committees are reported to the Clerk's Office and are then placed on the General Calendar for Rules Consideration.*

COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE

Wednesday, January 25, 2006

8:00 AM Appropriations - Economic Development
415 COB

9:00 AM Rules Committee
341 CAP

1:00 PM Legislative & Congressional Reapportionment
606 COB

2:00 PM Appropriations - Education
341 CAP

2:00 PM Appropriations - General Subcommittee
515 COB

2:00 PM Judiciary - Non-Civil Committee
132 CAP

2:00 PM Appropriations - Public Safety
415 COB

3:00 PM Transportation Committee
506 COB

3:30 PM Retirement Committee
403 CAP

** For full agendas, please visit the General Assembly website, select House Committees. This meeting schedule is set as of 5:00pm today. Times and locations may change at the request of the Committee Chairman.*

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